



"THE ELSIE ITEM"

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
USS LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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ISSUE #60

OUR AFFILIATES!

**The Wave
of the
Future
Organizes
at Branson**



Official Newsletter of the USS LCI National Association, a non-profit veteran's organization. Membership in the USS LCI National Association is open to any U. S. Navy or U. S. Coast Guard veteran who served aboard a Landing Craft, Infantry. Associate membership, without voting privileges, is offered to others.

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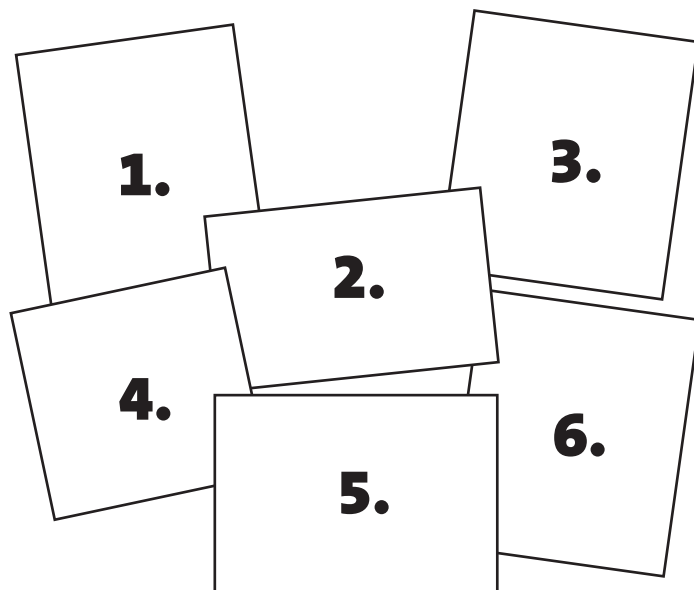
In This Issue:

After the obligatory "Word from the President, we begin this issue with a sampling of photos of our Branson reunion. They appear on pages 4 and 29 so that we can show them in color. We follow the pictures with the encouraging report of Joe Flynn on the steps taken toward an affiliates' organization to carry on the vision and fellowship of our Association. We give that priority in this issue because of its importance. Following that you'll read of other issues of importance to our Association before we turn to our traditional "sea stories". We conclude the stirring report on the gunboats at Iwo Jima with the second section of Carl Batzkall's compilation of action reports and deck logs and finish with the moving report from Dennis Blocker of the first hand accounts he has collected from the survivors of his grandfather's gunboat, LCI(G) 449. There's a bit more in a lighter vein along with our regular features, all of which we sincerely hope you enjoy.

Our Cover: Proud LCIs and equally proud sons, daughters, grandkids! That was certainly the hallmark of our Branson reunion. Here are some of those who made the reunion such a wonderful time:

Key to photos on cover

1. Carl Chapple, LCIs 451 and 1033 and his son Randy
2. John Boyce, CLI 651, his son Jim and grandson Brian
3. John "Crunk" Crunkleton, LCI 80, and his son Adam
4. Frank France, LCI 540, and his son John
5. Mark Reynolds, LCI 1088, his wife Billie Jean and daughter Lynn
6. Linda Wright, daughter of Max Wright, LCI(G) 80 and her son



A Word from the President

In a word—BRANSON WAS A BLAST!

From the first step into the lobby of the Branson Radisson to the final goodbyes, all three hundred and eighty LCLers and their families had one great time! The weather was perfect; the shows were fabulous; the fellowship with shipmates in the hospitality room and on the busses was outstanding. There may be a more hospitable place in the United States that puts all their effort into providing great, clean fun for everyone and especially for veterans, but that's very doubtful.

Great Shows!

Armed Forces Reunions did themselves proud in lining up the shows for our entertainment. On most reunions we are quite happy with a bit of sight-seeing and perhaps one evening of fine entertainment, but Branson is another place!

After greetings and fellowship in the hospitality room, our first days were given to entertainment beginning with the Yakov Smirnov show and concluding with the spectacular Shoji Tabuchi show. In between these two spectacularly staged shows, we had a wonderful evening cruise with dinner and entertainment aboard the Branson Belle and a morning visit to the impressive Veteran's Museum. Courteous and cheerful guides saw to our every need and whisked us from one venue to another on beautiful, modern busses.

Important Business

In addition to having so much fun, a lot of important business was transacted. You'll read more about them later in this issue, but it was a great encouragement to us all to see the enthusiasm generated by the large number of sons, daughters, grandkids and others who committed themselves to working to preserve the memories of LCLers. It all bodes well for having a smoothly functioning organization to carry on when LCLers themselves face the inevitable slowdown from advancing years.

With these considerations in mind, the Board took official action to plan for that future. In this issue, you will read of these actions concerning issues such as future reunion sites, disposition of our finances when the time comes to cease annual reunions and affiliate representation on the Board. We ask you to read these reports carefully, discuss them with shipmates and, if possible, with your state directors and national officers and directors. The Board has committed itself to listening to the membership carefully as we surge into the waters ahead and prepare for a return to port

-John Cummer



THE BRANSON REUNION IN PHOTOS



*Old friends meet once again in the hospitality room.
l to r, Jim Talbert, David Cox and Hal Bleyhl*



The crew of the 455 once again took the prize for having the most members from one crew present.



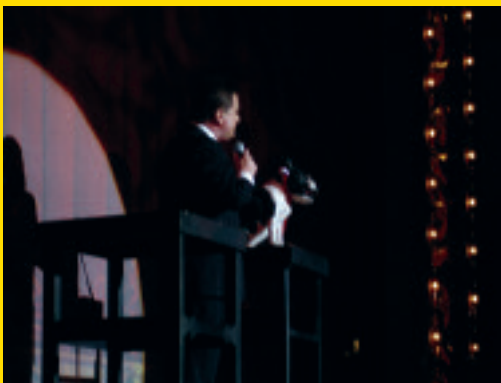
The show and the dinner aboard the Branson Belle were outstanding.



Officers and Board Members did get a bit of business done.

Seated, l to r, Jim Talbert, John Cumber, Gordon Smith, Rod Scurlock.

Standing, Connie Mulherin, David Cox, Hal Bleyhl



We saw and heard lots of great talent, but Todd Oliver and his talking dogs stole the show!



Affiliates Organize to Preserve LCI History

Reported by
Joe Flynn, LCI(G)347



Roger Grey, Austin, TX, to serve as Organizing Chairman and Representative to the LCI Board of Directors

The USS LCI National Association 2007 reunion, May 16–20, in Branson marked the first meeting of the affiliates, the group of members who are relatives or friends of LCI sailors. These individuals have already demonstrated their deep interest in preserving the memory of the service of young sailors in LCIs during World War II. Many are already doing research on family members in particular and LCI's in general. Of the current 87 affiliate members, some 40 attended the organizational meeting. Roger Gray, a grandson of an LCI sailor, who had been asked by President John Cummer to serve as Organizing Chairman for the Affiliates chaired the meeting. Gray also becomes a member of the USS LCI National Association Board of Directors to represent the Affiliates.

As determined at the meeting, the goal of the Affiliates will be: *"To Preserve LCI History."* To accomplish this it was agreed that the group would focus on:

- Gathering first hand accounts from LCI sailors and preserving research material;*
- Recruiting and assisting others interested in LCI research; and*
- Telling the stories of the LCI's and the men who sailed them.*

With lively discussion and high enthusiasm, the progress made at this formative meeting far exceeded expectations. Contact information for affiliates in attendance was recorded and will be circulated to those present to begin networking and sharing information. Interview techniques and ideas for locating more LCI members and recruiting affiliates were discussed. Cummer noted, "This group represents the future of the LCI Association."

As a positive step forward in reaching the goal of preserving the history of LCIs, two Affiliates volunteered and have been appointed as official historians for the USS LCI National Association. Dennis Blocker, San Antonio, Texas, whose grandfather served on USS LCI 449 will serve as historian for the Pacific Theater of Operations and John France of Oro Valley, Arizona, whose father served on USS LCI(L) 540, will serve in the same capacity for the European Theater of Operations.



Dennis Blocker



John France

The initial emphasis will be on improving access to existing information and to LCI archives. These archives are currently housed at the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomon, MD. Consideration will be given to the possibility of moving these archives to a location where they would be more accessible to our historians. The records at present are not indexed so that access is somewhat limited. Blocker and France might well tackle the job of cataloging and indexing the materials. If this is done, Blocker will sort out and forward to France all material dealing with the European Theater of Operations.

The Pacific War Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas, was mentioned as a possible alternate site for the archives.

If you have a friend or relative who is interested in researching LCI history or a particular ship, you may urge them to contact Roger, Dennis or John at the following addresses:

Roger Gray, 2104 Delvin Lane, Austin, TX, 78728;
Telephone 512-351-0804 | Email: lci454@yahoo.com

Dennis Blocker, 2847 Cedar Plain, San Antonio, TX, 78245;
Telephone 210-317-0931 | Email: lci449@hotmail.com

John France, 11621 Copper Spring Trail, Oro Valley, AZ, 85737;
Telephone 520-429-3792 | Email: lci540@aol.com

For valuable suggestions on how to preserve LCI history, see the article written by Dennis Blocker in this issue of *Elsie Item*.

In the near future, a press kit will be developed and circulated to affiliates and members, who are interested in telling the LCI story and preserving LCI history through news articles in the print and electronic media.

All in all, it was a good meeting and the new organization was successfully launched.

We are underway!



2009 Reunion Planned for Portland, Oregon with the Dream of Two LCIs Present!

When it comes to dreaming, National Director Gordon Smith believes in dreaming big!

Excited about the progress made on the restoration of LCI 713 to its World War II appearance, Gordon thought how great it would be for the Association to see it again—and to have the added thrill of seeing its sister ship, the 1091 moored right along side it.

Passing his dream on to the LCI National Association Board of Directors at the Branson reunion, his enthusiasm resulted in the decision to return to the Red Lion Inn in Portland, Oregon, for our 2009 reunion.

The 1091, operated for many years by Dr. Ralph Davis of McKinleyville, California, was donated to the Humbolt Bay Air and Sea Museum and is the only LCI we know of still operating under its own power.

Its appearance at our San Diego reunion several years ago was perhaps the most memorable event of all our reunions. At that time it was designated as the flagship of the USS LCI National Association and still retains that distinction. Altered somewhat from its World War II appearance, plans are underway to restore it to its original configuration.

Sailing the 1091 to Portland would pose several difficult problems, but Affiliate Joe Flynn, spokesman for the Humbolt Bay Air and Sea Museum, indicated their willingness to give serious consideration to the possibility. With two years to go before the 2009 reunion, there may just be enough time to work out such considerations as expense, crewing and Coast Guard approval for the voyage. Seeing the two LCIs moored together would, indeed, be something never to be forgotten and worth the effort that would be involved.

In making this decision, the Board emphasized that no final decision has been made on the possibility of the 2009 reunion being our last. If indeed it is the last national reunion, local and state reunions would undoubtedly continue as would the publication of “Elsie Item.”

Cummer, Scurlock to Serve Another Term

John Cummer and Rod Scurlock were re-elected for another one-year term as President and Vice President respectively at the business meeting of the LCI Association in Branson. With no one else nominated, the election was by unanimous consent.

“We appreciate the vote of confidence,” said Cummer, “and will continue to do our best to serve our members for another year.”



An Appeal to LCI Veterans

By Dennis Blocker
LCI Historian, Pacific Area

My grandfather S1/c Clifford Lemke served aboard the LCI(G)-449 and saw action at Saipan, Guam, Tinian and Iwo Jima. What is sad is that I learned nothing about my grandfather's service from him as he did not talk about it. Information I have gathered came from his shipmates and sundry sources such as letters, diaries, deck logs, action reports and here say. I wish I could adequately describe for you the personal anguish I feel at never having talked to my grandpa about his service. Of course now it is too late as he died in 1999.

But it is not too late for you. I plead with you to tell your story no matter how insignificant you think it may be. So many stories expand upon the tales from other LCI men. It is really quite marvelous. I know some of you went through combat at its worst and it may be difficult to talk about but it needs to be done. In cases where it is hard to talk about why not write it instead. We need these stories more than ever. I can not stress enough the importance of getting your story preserved. **It is ABSOLUTELY vital!**

How To Preserve Your Story and Share it with Others

There are several ways to preserve your story which are really quite easy:

1. Get a tape or digital voice recorder from a Wal-Mart or Radio Shack and record your story. You will want to jot down some notes on paper prior to recording so you will be able to keep the story going. Once you record your story have someone make a copy so you have a back-up copy. If this is impossible, send the recording to me and I will take care of the rest. I will make sure your family gets a copy for your family history. Here are some points you may want to cover but feel free to cover whatever you wish:
 - a. What you were doing when Pearl Harbor was bombed?
 - b. Why you chose the Navy and the circumstances around it?
 - c. What did you think when you first saw the LCI?
 - d. What was your job aboard ship?
 - e. How were arrangements for sleeping, eating, washing, restrooms, washing clothes, medical problems?
 - f. Who were your closest friends aboard ship?
 - g. Did you see combat and where?
 - h. Any close calls?
 - i. Any casualties on your ship?
 - j. Did you take any prisoners?
 - k. Where did you have liberties?
 - l. How were your officers?
 - m. Did anyone sing or play instruments during down time?
 - n. Was there a pet aboard?
 - o. Did your LCI have a nickname and logo painted on the conn? If so, give a description including colors and dimensions.
 - p. Was your LCI camouflaged? If so, what were the colors?
 - q. Did you tie up to other ships and get ice cream, watch movies, etc?
 - r. Did you see any enemy aircraft or ships?
 - s. Did you see any enemy civilians?
 - t. Were you wounded? What were the circumstances?
 - u. Did you do any fishing?
 - v. Was your cook any good?
2. If you are unable to record yourself and have no one that can record for you, you can write it out. If you have trouble writing, have a family member or a friend take notes and either write out your story for you or record it for you as suggested above.
3. If these options do not sound workable for you, you can always call me Dennis Blocker, the LCI Historian for the Pacific War or John France, the LCI Historian for the Atlantic.



Either of us will be glad to record your story, as we both have recorders which will record off the phone. (See our addresses below)

4. Another important thing to do is to copy and send to us all letters, diaries, memoirs, pictures, citations, action reports, deck logs, ships histories—in short anything you have relating to LCIs.
 - a. When copying documents be sure to include any dates, covers, envelopes, etc.; because dates can be taken off of these.
 - b. When copying pictures, do not Xerox copy them in black and white, as they become too dark and are useless. The best thing to do is take them to a store like CVS, Walgreens or Wal-Mart and have their photo departments make 4x6 prints of your pictures. Then have the prints put on CDs so they will be preserved. You can then send the CDs to either John France or myself and send the pictures as well with the backs labeled.
5. We want any picture of yourself in uniform whether it be in boot camp, service school, walking down the street in Honolulu, life aboard ship or back home on leave.. We want pictures of your ship and shipmates as well. Even if you think the quality of the original is too bad we still want a copy. However, be sure to take the time to label the pictures so we know who we are looking at. **THIS IS VITAL!**
6. Send a short bio of your life to us much like the ones some of you wrote for the LCI books volumes 1 and 2.
7. If you have any maps, related LCI articles, newspaper clippings from your home town, clippings from periodicals, etc., we want copies. If you read a book and remember seeing a story about an LCI, we want to know about it. We want copies of everything!

Speaking of copying things. If you have no one to leave your materials to why not leave them to us, the LCI Affiliates, who are working so hard to preserve your history.

Finally:

Please realize that we are your wives, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, great grandchildren and friends and we love you. We are extremely proud of you and thankful for what you did for us. Help us preserve your history which is ours as well.

Please contact us at these addresses:

John France

LCI Historian Atlantic War
11621 Copper Spring Trail
Oro Valley, AZ 85737
520-429-3792
lci540@aol.com

Dennis Blocker

LCI Historian Pacific War
2847 Cedar Plain
San Antonio, TX. 78245
210-317-0931—Cell
210-673-8854—Home
lci449@hotmail.com



Welcome Aboard!

*Another nice, long list of shipmates to welcome aboard or to recognize as new lifetime members.
We're glad to see every name here and we do wish you a hearty "Welcome Aboard!"*

Now, get below, stow your gear and report to the Bos'n to pick up your paint chipper!

New First Time Members

LCI 118 (Canada)
C. W. Robinson
LaSalle, Quebec

Royal Navy LCI 301
C. J. Innes,
South Shields, UK

LCI 400
Louis G. Watson
Bloomington, IN

LCI 433
Francis H. Shovlin
Denver, CO

LCI 447
Richard M. La Londe
Budd Lake, NJ

LCI(G) 449
William E. Hildebrand
Louisville, KY

LCI 458
Charles A. Farrell
Murray, UT

LCI 558
Joseph C. Friebele
Wilmington, IL

LCI 600 & 441
Robert P. Laclede
St. Louis, MO

LCI 697
William R. Beattie
China Spring, TX

LCI 752
Timothy J. Benton
Nebo, NC

LCI (F) 786
Carl W. Knox
Rogers, AR

(No LCI listed)
Herbert Nolda
Ravenna, NE

New First Time Affiliates

Royal Navy LCI 244
Frank Walton,
Suffolk, UK

LCI 773
Robert H. Craft, Jr.
Media, PA

(No LCI Designated)
Cynthia S. Coffey
Lyndhurst, OH

New Life Members
LCI(G) 346
Arthur G. Konrad,
Huntington Valley, PA

LCI 559 & 32
Chester Lee Harding
Jasper, IN

LCI(G) 373
Moss P. Mills
Roswell, NM

LCI(G) 561
Russell Schumaier
St. Louis, MO

LCI 567
Duane E. Luallen
Vandalia, IL

LCI 584
Robert J. Ascherl
Snohomish, WA

LCI 596
Henri L. Deltieure
Flushing, NY

LCI 687
James H. Marland
Erieville, NY

LCI 774
Howard H. Behrens
Houston, TX

LCI(M) 802
Del Carbiener
Bountiful, UT



LCI 961
Alfred H. Philipp
Fernandina Beach, FL

LCI 995
Thomas A. Troutman
Buckanan Dam, TX

LCI 1014
Warren F. Strawsnyder
Vero Beach, FL

New Lifetime Affiliate Members

LCI 366
Leon J. Steyer
New Riegel, OH

LCI 372
Gary Embrey
Vero Beach, FL

LCI 412
William O. Barnes
Hilton Head, SC

LCI 579
Albert Hove
Mechanicsville, VA

LCI 579
Andrew E. Overby, Jr.
Tempe, AZ

LCI 579
David Ray Overby
Salt Lake City, UT

LCI 579
James A. Overby
Provo, UT

LCI 966
Edward B. Sorrentino
Doswell, VA

LCI 1018
Charles W. Kellogg
Ridgefield, WA

Your Dues are Due!

**Help keep our Association going
by your prompt payment**

**Annual membership dues - \$25.00 - for Fiscal Year 2007
ARE NOW DUE**

Please send your dues to:

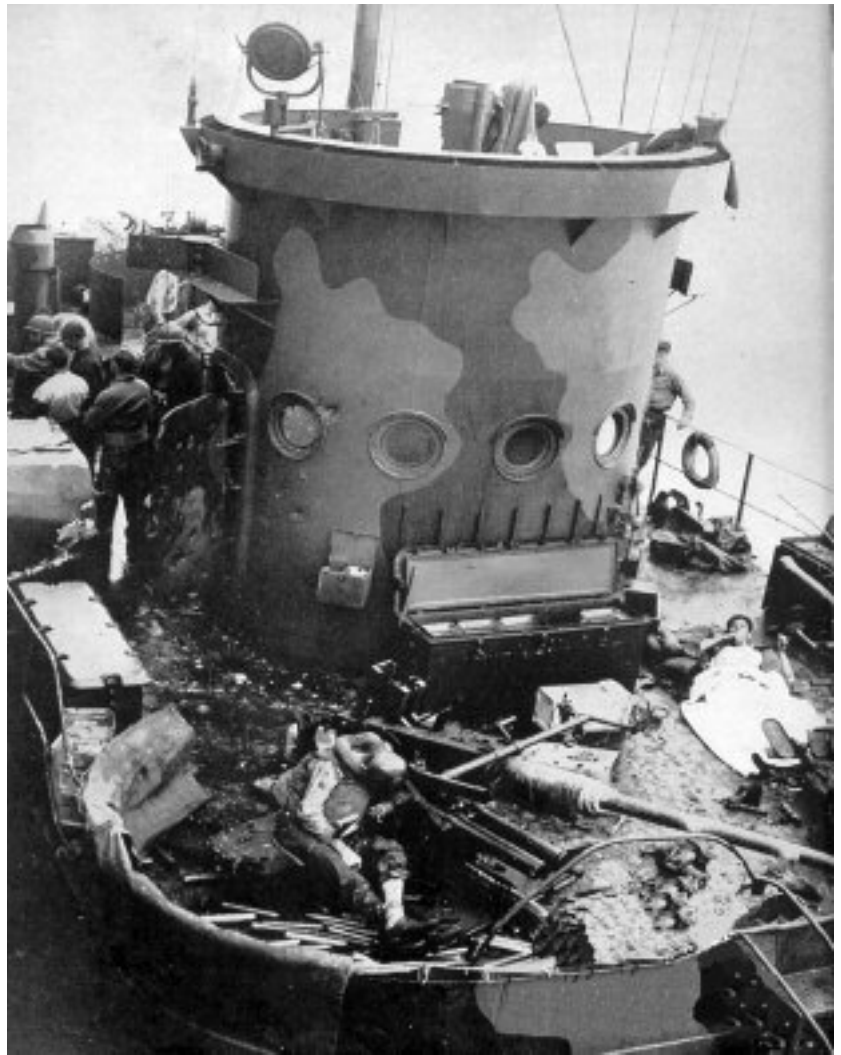
USS LCI National Association
c/o Nehemiah Communications, Inc
101 Rice Bent Way #6
Columbia, SC 29229



The Gunboats at Iwo Jima: Part II

Compiled by
Carl V. Batzkall

In our last issue we carried the first part of the carefully researched deck logs and action reports of the LCI Gunboats involved in the pre-invasion protection of the UDT swimmers at Iwo Jima, February 17, 1945. We now conclude the narrative, beginning with entries from the log of USS LCI(G) 441, one of the small, courageous gunboats



The last full measure of duty

Deck Log of the USS LCI(G) 441

1104—Large shell from Japanese shore battery hit our starboard side in the galley and exploded causing hole 4^{1/2} feet in diameter, also causing numerous shrapnel holes in galley deck, gun deck and various bulkheads, wounded two gunners of after 20mm battery and started fire in 20mm ready box.

1106—Another shell hit clipping space at frames 60 and 61 causing hole three feet in diameter in starboard side and also numerous holes in various bulkheads.

1143—Received hit on forecastle which demolished vent and did minor hull damage.

1152—Received hit from large enemy shell just aft of no.3 40mm. Casualties extensive; caused hole four feet in diameter in gun deck; extensive damage to steering and engine, telegraph and battle telephone circuit in pilot house. Many shrapnel holes in gun deck, main deck and various bulkheads.

1155—Hit at bulkhead 67, 2^{1/2} feet above the water line by large explosive shell. Caused hole three feet in diameter in starboard side, set fire to bedding and clothing in after crews quarter. Did considerable damage to switchboard and piping in engine room.

1210—Requested permission to come alongside of *USS Nevada*, 4,000 yards off the beach.





LCI 441 comes alongside USS Nevada to unload casualties.

1235—Moored alongside starboard side to.

1245—Transferred the following men who were killed in action to the *USS Nevada* for burial at sea: Conners, W.T., Ensign; Griffen, W.E.QM2c; Snider, C.E., S1c; Scott, J. R., S1c, DeLong, G. O., S2c.

Transferred the following seriously wounded in action to the *USS Nevada* for treatment: Trexler, Moses (n) S2C; Gornek, S. W., GM3C; Hardee, L. V. CBM; Neff, G. B, S1C; Pasacic, John (n), EM 3c; Starbuck, J. D., S1C; Rudolph, J.R., COX; Ratkgeber, A., H, F1C; Darr, J. A. GM3C; Gawlik, N.J., S1C; Miller, J.C.F1C; Russell, C.E. GM3C.

Transferred the following slightly wounded men to the *USS Nevada* for treatment: Brewer, E.G., S1C; Cain, B. E., F1C; Demurk, E. J., S1C; LaCleda, R. P., MoMM3C; McCold, R.M., GM1C; Morris, P. W. S1C; Rayn, R.D, S2C; Smith, F.J. EM3C;

Following men were slightly wounded in action and were treated aboard the *USS Nevada* and were returned to the ship for duty: Cooper, E.W., Ensign; Edwards, Willie (m) , StM3C; Maers, J.D. Jr. MoMM1C; Shaw, M. F., MoMM3C

1601 Received word that Starbuck, Jack Dalton, had died aboard the *USS Nevada*.

—F. W. Bell, Lt(jg), USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of USS Nevada (BB-36)

1216—LCI 441 came alongside port bow to transfer the below named wounded and dead personnel with service records and health records. Wounded (as per LCI 441 listing). Dead (as per LCI 441 listing)

1605—LCI 441 cast off

1615—Starbuck, J. D., S1c, 291-95-19, USNR, died aboard as a result of wounds received in action against the enemy while assigned to LCI 441.

1728—Trexler, M., S2c, 932-29-93, USNR, died aboard as a result of wounds received in action against the enemy while assigned to LCI 441.

1805—Held funeral services for the following named officer and men of LCI 441 who were killed in action against the enemy: Ensign W. T. Connors; Griffin, W. E., QM2c; Starbuck, J. D., S1c; Scott, J. R., S1c; Snider, C. E., S1c; DeLong, G. O., S2c; Trexler, M. S2c. These dead were buried at sea in Latitude 24 degrees, 44.5 minutes N. Longitude, 141 degrees, 19.5 minutes E. in 160 fathoms of water with suitable military honors.

—H. L. Grosskopf, CAPT, USN
Commanding



Deck Log of USS LCI(G) 438

1103—197 mm hit received at waterline starboard side in vicinity of Frame 28, ship compartment #2.

1112—Near miss mortar shrapnel paced two small holes in starboard bow. Personnel casualties: Brown, trainer on bow 40mm gun, portions of two middle fingers, left hand, removed by shrapnel; Bennett, C.C., large portion of left foot removed by shrapnel. Both men were given first aid and morphine by PhM Moore. Minor injuries sustained by Moore, H. A.; Hocking, G; and Bennett, L. Wilson, C., Landstron and Moore, H. A. also treated for shock.

1130—Bennett, C. C. and Brown, W. M., both S1c, left ship for *USS Bryant* (DD 665)

1230—USS LCI(G) 346 came alongside and helped us control flooding in No. 2 compartment.

1600—USS LCI(G) 346 moored to our port side. Her crew assisting in controlling the flooding of #2 compartment.

1625—USS LCI(G) 346 cast off and we proceeded to vicinity of *USS Terror* (CM-5)

1645—Moored port side to USS LCI(G) 457 which was moored to *USS Terror*. We proceeded to take on material for shoring.

1753—Cast off all lines from USS LCI(G) 457

—B. H. Powers, Lt(jg), USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of USS Bryant (DD—665)

1130—Received aboard from LCI 438 Brown, Worley M. 868-03-81, S1c, USNR and Bennett, Clayton C. 834-23-50, S1c, USNR, for emergency medical treatment of gun shot wounds.

—GC Seay, CDR, USN
Commanding

Deck Log of USS LCI(G) 346

1235—Called special sea detail to go alongside USS LCI(G) 438 to give assistance.

1300—Moored starboard side to to port side of USS LCI(G) 438.

1302—Took one Handy Billy pump, three sections of suction hose and 2 suction strainers aboard USS LCI(G) 438.

1310—Set up Handy Billy to pump out the No. 1 compartment. By 1330 our men were manning all of USS LCI(G) 438's damage control crews including three Handy Billys and a bucket brigade.

1505—Secured bucket brigade, pumping crews still operating.

1600—Still alongside USS LCI(G) 438 assisting her with battle damage control.

1605—Changing position with USS LCI(G) 438 still moored alongside so as to ride with the sea and prevent excess water from flooding damaged compartment of USS LCI(G) 438.

1621—Men and gear being returned to ship.

1625—All personnel and gear aboard ship.

1627—Cast off all lines and underway.

1628—Proceeding on parallel course with USS LCI(G) 438 as she prepares to go alongside USS LCI(G) 457 for emergency repairs.

—Harry Gruver, Lt(jg), USNR
Commanding



Action Report, USS LCI(G) 457

1103—Approximately four near misses of mortar fire off the port bow and two misses off starboard. One hit on port side one yard off the bow thought to have resulted in 3 foot by 4 foot hole later reported as water flooded compartment.

1104—Received following reports: #1 compartment flooding fast due to large hole in port side; crew's quarters flooding fast due to hole on starboard side; personnel casualties on three 40mm guns. No. 1 40mm gun out of commission. Ship continuing to receive 25mm enemy machine gun fire.

1106 - #2 40mm being cleared of casualties, numbering three. #3 40mm not able to train to port. This gun also had two casualties. Casualty to loaders of (2) starboard 20mm guns. Casualty to loader of after port 20mm gun and to gunner of port forward 20mm gun.

1107—LCI(G) 469 on station to relieve LCI(G) 457.

1110—Proceeded to *USS Gilmer* (APD-11) approximately 4,000 yards from beach to transfer casualties to medical officer.

1115—Report received 12 serious casualties and nine minor casualties among personnel. First aid being given all injured under direction of LCI Group Eight Pharmacist Mate as ship's company Pharmacist Mate severely wounded while going to the aid of another casualty.

1125—Closed *USS Gilmer* (APD-11) and transferred casualties by small boat.

1215—Alongside LCI(G) 466 which was moored to port side of *USS Tennessee*. Damage Control Officer of *USS Tennessee* surveyed damage. Flooding reaching limit as ship lowered in water. Apparent ship would stay afloat.

1250—Pulled away from LCI(G) 466 and *USS Tennessee*.

1515—Went alongside *USS Terror* to use large

centrifugal submersible pump on flooded compartments in addition to ship's gasoline pumps and bucket brigade.

1855—Cast off from *USS Terror*. #1 compartment flooded with four and one half feet of water. Crew's quarters pumped free of water.

Casualty report:

1. The below named man died as a result of wounds received in action against an organized enemy: Helvey, Willard Douglas, PhM1c, 616-51-26, USNR. Burial was at sea.
2. The below named men were seriously wounded: Aro, Everardo (n), S1c, 565-36-27, V-6, USNR; Burke, Donald Thomas, S2c, 570-55-85, V-6, USNR; Carson, Max Lester, S1c, 660-62-34, V-6, USNR; Christensen, Wallace Sidney, SM3c, 885-14-34, V-6, USNR; Cinnamon, Clayton Leroy, SC3c, 876-89-70, V-6, USNR; Holland, Earl James, S1c, 817-68-93, V-6, USNR, Nute, Robert John, GM3c, 892-28-29, V-6, USNR; Peden, Alpha Edward, Jr. GM2c, 872-83-63, V-6, USNR. Rosch, John Henry, Jr., GM3c, 871-01-66, V-6, USNR; Sanders, John Willis, Jr., SC3c, 627-92-93, V-6, USNR; Schnell, Howard Lee, GM3c, 876-45-82, V-6, USNR.

These men were transferred to the *USS Gilmer*, APD 11, for treatment.

3. The below named men were slightly wounded:

Avonto, Henry Dominick, SM1c, 808-74-23, SV, USNR; DeJournett, John Francis, SK2c, 312-29-70, V-6, USNR; Dixon, Bertie, Jr, COX, 266-20-39, USN; Evans, James Monnie, S1c, 657-86-75, V-6, USNR; Exum, Wallace Louis, S1c, 565-52-51, V-6, USNR; Holst, Carl Henry, S1c, (SM) 886-93-47, USNR; Keirnan, Robert Frank, SM3c, 286-91-33, USNR; Mahler, Donald Arthur, Ensign, 391-96-67, DL-USNR; Slingerland, Edward Gilman, Lt(jg) 234-43-69, D-USNR.

These men were treated aboard ship.

—Jerome J. O'Dowd, Lt(jg), USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of USS Tennessee (BB-43)

1217—LCI 457 came alongside port side of LCI 466 to transfer wounded men to this ship.

1247—LCI 457 cast off port quarter having transferred wounded men.

—John B. Hefferman, Capt. USN
Commanding

Deck Log of LCI(G) 469

1113—Received hit astern. Aft phones report fire on stern.

1118—Fire reported out on the stern. Received hits in radio shack, Captain's cabin, officer's head, crew's head and stern. Battle dressing station notified of injured men on aft 20mm and fantail.

1128—Received two hits at waterline in number 4 compartment. Began taking on water. Received hits in galley. Word passed, one man injured there.

1134—Received two hits at waterline in engine room and hits on gun deck, pilot house and conning tower. Taking on water in engine room.

1135—Received report from Damage Control that all holes in both engine room and no. 4 compartment were very small and were now plugged. No longer taking on water.

1142—Received hits on gun deck, port forward compartment on main deck/ Ens. Nicholson seriously wounded.

1150—Received hit in pilot house passageway. Fire reported in pilot house. Fire out. Injured man reported in pilot house. Injured man very minor wounds.

1210—Reported all guns now operative; all underwater damage under control.

1310—Proceeding at various courses and speeds to vicinity of *USS Terror*.

1500—Went alongside *USS Terror* and transferred the following wounded men for treatment: Nicholson, James Collins, Ensign, 258279, USNR; Tolly, LeRoy Herbert, MoMM3c, 875-37-92, USNR; Martin, Delmas "M", S1c (EC) 877-01-13, USNR; Dudley, W. B., S1c, 601-34-44. USNR.

1559—LCI(G) 469 underway.

—G. M. Conners, Lt(jg), USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of USS Terror (CM-5)

1531—LCI(G) 449 moored to port quarter for battle damage repairs.

1537—Received aboard the following casualties from LCI(G) 469: Ens. J. C. Nicholson, 258279, USNR; Tolly, L.G. MoMM 3c, 875-37-92; Dudley, W B., S1c, 601-34-44; Martin, D. M. S1c, 877-01-13.

1559—LCI(G) 449 underway.

—H. W. Blakeslee, Cdr, USN
Commanding

Action Report, LCI(G) 471

1104—Proceeding in to beach to relieve LCI(G) 438 which has been hit.

1106—Relieved LCI(G) 438 and drawing heavy enemy fire from beaches.

1120—Received direct hit on well deck which passed through No. 2 magazine and exploded in No. 2 troop compartment causing slight fire. Shrapnel did considerable damage to 40 mm ammunition but caused no explosions.

1123—Fire in N. 2 troop compartment under control and no serious damage.

1128—Received hit on forecastle which knocked



out NO. 1 40 mm gun; killed 9 men and wounded 6 others. Started fire in forecastle compartment.

1129—Received another hit on starboard ramp which tore a large hole in starboard ramp but did very little actual damage.

1140—Fire in forecastle extinguished.

1145—Fire in No. 2 troop compartment extinguished.

1213—Commenced transferring wounded men to Tennessee for treatment.

1647—Commenced burying our dead with Ensign L. M. Hermes, USNR, acting as Chaplain.

1742—Completed burial of our dead at sea.

Casualty List:

1. The following officer killed in action due to enemy gunfire: Hagan, Louis Patrick, 383881, Ensign (D) USNR.

2. The following enlisted personnel were killed in action due to enemy gunfire:

Adamson, Jessie Leroy 671-79-18, S2c, USNR; Bernethy, James Franklin, 841-72-67, SC3c, USNR; Cano, Richard (n) 879-92-38. S1c, USNR; Harris, Billie Joe, 840-72-47, GM3c, USNR; Morehouse, Troy Loys, 849-00-39. S1c, USNR; Morrissey, William Peter, 201-97-61, GM1c, USNR; Nygard, Donald (n), 638-86-79, COX, USNR; Pond, Richard Harrison, 841-72-59, S1c, USNR

3. The following enlisted personnel were wounded in action due to enemy gunfire:

Anderson, Harry Charles, 266-65-70, BM2c, USN; Frizelle, Howard Ellis, 844-77-74, COX, USNR; Jablonoski, Theodore Stanley, 921-00-86, S2c, USNR. Phelan, Gordon Thomas, 381-70-75, SC2c, USNR; Terraciano, Jerry Anthony, 710-43-65, SC2c, USNR; White, James Wesley, 273-02-24, F1c, USNR.

—Robert S. Midgins, Lt(jg) USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of the USS Tennessee (BB-43)

1209—LCI 471 came alongside port bow to transfer wounded men to this ship.

1256—LCI 471 cast off from port bow having transferred wounded men.

19 February 1945

1850—Terracciano, J. A. 710+43-65, SC2c, USNR died this date from small shell fragment wounds. This man was received aboard from LCI 471 17 February 1945 with other wounded personnel.

—John B. Hefferman, Capt, USN
Commanding

Deck Log of LCI(G) 466

1110—Proceeded in toward beach to replace LCI(G) 473.

1123—Received three hits believed to be 188mm shells at forward portion of gun deck. Pilot house demolished, killing two men. Shields of starboard and port 40mm guns hit, two men killed and one believed to have been blown overboard from the concussion. Those dead are as follows:

Barton, Clarence Edward, S1c, 342-92-33;
Coppinger, Thomas Edward, S1c, 680-63-08;
Foldessy, Glenn Allan, F1c, 949-54-72;
Pieplow, Robert Keith, S2c, 343-08-80

The man missing in action, believed to be dead is Hester, Huey Pierce, 847-63-08

Those wounded in action are:

James J. Horovitz, Lt. 160460, USNR; Robert J. McCarty, Ensign, 384552, USNR; Thomas N. Lennon, Ensign, 384508, USNR; Atherton, Henry E. GM3c, 867-65-74, USNR; Bauer, William R. QM3c, 710-75-58, USNR; Brotschol, Frank J. GM3c, 709-19-56, USNR; Clark, Robert N., F1c, 960-99-88, USNR; Foughner, Jesse L., S1c, 924-26-84, USNR; Garwick, Stanley J., S1c, 762-34-99, USNR. Jaquez, Francisco (n), S1c, 842-66-27, USNR. Leverett, Aubrey (n), S1c, 553-89-40, USNR; Long, Horace J.,



SC3c, 996-16-79, USNR; Mamola, Edward J. COX, 378-60-26. USNR; Neal, Oliver L. S1c, 886-98-99. USNR; Peacock, Robert H. GM3c, 839-90-06. USNR; Pick, Charles T., S2c, 756-23-10, USNR; Quigley, Robert P. PhM2c, 632-69-75, USNR; Wells, Harold L. SM3c, 555-93-95. USNR

1202—Moored alongside *USS Tennessee* and transferred the following named men with records for treatment [Identification as per list above]

Officers: Robert J. McCarthy, Thomas N. Lennox

Enlisted Men: Atherton, Henry. Brotschol, Frank J. Clark, Robert N., Faughner, Jesse L., Jaquez, Francisco (n), Leverett, Aubrey (n), Long, Horace J., Mamola, Edward J., Neal, Oliver L., Peacock, Robert H., Pick, Charles T., Wells, Harold L.

1237 - Got underway from *USS Tennessee* and proceeded seaward

1645—At Latitude 24 degrees, 37 .00 minutes N, Longitude 141 degrees 22.40 minutes E, burial services held for the following named men. Ensign at half mast.

Foldessy, Glenn Allan, F1c, 949-54-72; Coppinger, Thomas Edward, S1c, 682-63-08; Barton, Clarence Edward, S1c, 342-92-33; Pieplow, Robert Keith, S2c, 343-08-80

—Lt. J. J Horovitz, USNR
Commanding

Deck Log of USS Tennessee (BB-43)

LCI 466 came alongside port quarter for transfer of wounded men to this ship.

1251—LCI 466 cast off, having transferred wounded men.

—John B. Hefferman, Capt., USN
Commanding

And so, in the almost prosaic language of deck logs and actions reports, the saga of the brave men of the LCI gunboats at Iwo Jima is told. Let us think soberly and reverently of each of the men in those too long lists of wounded and killed and remember again the sacrifices they— and those who survived—made on that bloody day, February 17, 1945.



THE FIREY ORDEAL OF LCI(G) 449 AT IWO JIMA

by Dennis Blocker,
Grandson of S1c Cliff Lemke, LCI(G) 449



The story of the gunboats at Iwo Jima comes to us not only in the action reports and ships logs researched by Carl Batzkall, but also in the memories of the men who were there. Dennis Blocker's driving zeal to preserve the memory of his grandfather led him to seek to contact every living survivor of LCI 449 that he could contact and get their story of that eventful day.

The result is an impressive, well-written, highly detailed account of the ordeal and heroism of the men of LCI(G) 449 which we think serves well as the conclusion of the account of those heroic gunboats.

Dennis' grandfather was Cliff Lemke, one of the crew of the 449.

"This is a story that needs to be remembered" says Dennis, "It is the story of a few American sailors taking a beating at Iwo Jima so Marines could have a chance for success" Dennis notes that fifty-four men lost their lives and over one hundred and fifty were wounded. As a result of their heroism, the group would receive awards galore including a Presidential Unit Citation, one Medal of Honor, eleven Navy Crosses and over one hundred Silver and Bronze Stars for selflessly brave acts.

Here is the story as Dennis learned it.



As the LCIs of Group Eight formed up in line abreast facing the beach with 500 yards between them, they increased speed and passed the battleship Nevada. A cameraman aboard the Nevada caught the scene with a quick click of his camera thereby preserving one of the most inspiring LCI photos of World War Two. The LCIs from right to left, facing the beach, were the 457, 441, 449, 439, 474, 450 and 473. Several sailors, including Wally Exum from the 457, said that when they were near the 1,000 yard line from the beach, buoys were spotted. Wally looked and thought, "Well, our Navy didn't put them there."

At that moment he heard a loud BOOM!! He looked to his left and saw the 449 take a hit on the bow and its 40mm ammunition was blowing up. "I saw two men flying through the air," said Exum, "I looked to my 40mm crew and said, 'I think we're in for it!' Then they took some hits.

One of the two men flying through the air was S2c John Flook from Myersville, MD, a husband and the father of a son named Gene. The crew found his left leg and that was all. The other man flying through the air was Ensign Fredrick Cooper, Jr, of Orange City, Iowa. He was a high school teacher and basketball coach and was serving as the bow gunnery officer. He was seen by the Engineering Officer, passing by in the water, unconscious, as they continued toward the beach. Cooper's body was never recovered and his wife and daughter Rebekah would never see him again. Sitting in the pointer position on the bow gun was S1c Bruce Hallet. The hit from the Japanese mortar had set off the 40mm ammunition causing the splinter shield of the gun tub to fly up and slap Bruce in the back, forcing him to the deck saving his life. "I just laid there. then crawled to the bow and just hung on as the ammo blew up."

He stood up and saw his good friend Lawrence Bozarth was dead, burned beyond recognition. His head had been blown off and flew back thirty feet into the well deck 20mm gun position. Bozarth was a religious kid from Oklahoma City whose father was a broom maker. In fact, when

on leave in San Diego he went to the local broom shop instead of going to Tijuana, Mexico, to party. It was at the broom shop that he met a lovely young lady whom he would write often but never see again.

Next to Bozarth's body was a huge six foot hole where the missing Ensign Cooper had been standing. The gun captain, GM3c Chuck Banko, was blown back from the 40mm and was unconscious, hanging upside down on the ladder leading down to the well deck. He vaguely remembers walking toward the fantail for treatment as instructed to do so by the Boatswain's Mate, Frank Blow. Banko remembers seeing bodies everywhere – "It was" he said, "surreal".

These pieces had been his buddies just moments before. They had drunk beer together on Mog Mog, read letters together aloud together, been through combat on Saipan, Guam and Tinian without a scratch and now this. It was unbearable. At that moment Chuck Banko mentally refused to take in anymore. To this day he remembers nothing else.

William Hildebrand of Louisville, Kentucky, was getting ammo from David Fletcher, the ship's clown, and passing it up to the bow gun when he received a face full of shrapnel and fire. The next memory he has is of trying to open the door under the ladder to get away from the fire. He says he was not very brave that day. His ship-mates think differently..

The next hit was between the two 40mms on the forward part of the gun deck. This is where Charles Hightower was the second loader on the port side gun. Charles was taking ammo from Robert Minnick, who was and up and coming baseball player, and passing it to a Virginian named Ralph Owens. Hightower and Owens were best friends. They talked of meeting each other's families after the war and about getting married and having a family.

On the 40mm in the pointer seat position was William Tominac of Chicago. Tommie was a huge



guy and was liked by all. Also on the gun was Amos Reagan who had been on the ship quite a while. The men of this gun in particular were a comfort to the new guys because they had seen combat at Kwajalein, Eniwetok, Saipan, Guam and Tinian. The younger guys were told that the 449 was a lucky ship. The fellows on the starboard 40mm were a little harder to identify because all of them except one were killed. My grandpa, who was on that gun, never talked about it.

When the mortars hit between the forward 40mms on the gun deck, Charles Vogel was coming up the ladder to get aid for those injured on the bow. The flying shrapnel from the second hit removed the top of his head clean off – helmet and all. He fell where he was, dead.

Charles Hightower felt a blast of air and heard swishing and clanging all around him. Though his pants were full of holes, he had no injuries. Behind him the eighteen year old Minnick was cut in half. In front of him, an arms length away, lay his best friend Ralph Owens prostrate on the deck, mortally wounded. Tominac was slumped over his gun dead. The Tennessean, Amos Reagan, had been blown off the ship but his life vest had caught on the rail. Reagan, unconscious, dangled beside the ship inches from the water, smoldering. Charles Hightower pulled him in, patted out the fire on his life vest and saved Reagan's life.

The starboard 40 was a blood bath as well. Norm Holgate ran to the gun deck from the fantail to check on his buddy Clarence Hoffman. When Norm made it to the gun deck he found his buddy's lifeless body sprawled out on the deck. Earlier Hoffman's mother had volunteered to write him since Norm's parents didn't write. The family became his own. Norm could not bear to answer a letter from Mrs. Hoffman weeks later asking if her son was really dead. He had the chaplain do it because it just hurt too much.

Clarence Kepner of Cairo, Illinois, was the ship's cook and had the duty of carrying a stretcher to

wherever the wounded men were. Responding to the cries of the wounded on the bow, he was right on the gun deck headed for the bow when he was slammed in the legs as though with a sledge hammer. He looked down and his legs were at awkward angles with bones sticking out in several places. "Well, this is it," he thought.

S1c John Overchuck was in the well deck firing away at Iwo Jima with his 20mm when the gun deck was hit. He had just unharnessed himself to go get a replacement part as his gun had malfunctioned. Because of the concussion John blacked out. When he came to, he was lying on the deck, staring at half of a man's face. John thought, "Oh, my God, is it me?" He felt his face and discovered that it was well. He tried to stand but a few guys had been blown on top of him. He pushed them off and looked up to see what had happened.

Up on the gun deck, between the 40s, stood Howard Schoenleben who had been manning the starboard 40mm. Howard looked down at John and said, "Jesus Christ, John, I'm hungry!" Overchuck though, "Of all the things to say at a time like this!" Howard turned, and John saw that his whole right shoulder had been blown off and was dangling down by his side complete with his arm. At that moment, the Engineering Officer, Ensign Leo Bedell, walked up to Howard, put his arms about his waist and led him to the fantail where first aid was being administered by the Pharmacist Mate, Henry Beuckman.

Leo could see Schoenleben's heart beating in his chest because of the huge gaping hole where his shoulder had been. Leo lay Howard on the deck, gave him a couple of shots of morphine and heard Howard's last words, "Howe, Howe, Howe"

Across from Overchuck's 20mm in the well deck was another 20mm fired by the only black guy on the ship, Steward's mate Raphael Johnson of Decatur, Texas. Johnson was holding his lower jaw and teeth in his hands because the concussion had thrown the 20mm magazine back into his face. His loader, Junior Hollowell, also a Texan,



was very concerned about Ralphael and bandaged his buddy's wounds and gave him a shot of morphine. Hollowell still remembers the sight of all the body parts scattered everywhere and the blood awash on the deck.

If things were not bad enough, there was more to come. In the conning tower things were somewhat confused. Messages were not being acknowledged in the pilot house below, so an officer went to see why no one was answering the orders of movement. As the door of the pilot house flew open, the metallic smell of blood slammed against him. Quartermaster William Vollendorf was on the deck with some serious leg wounds. Richard Holty, who was on the headphones, was bleeding profusely from his mangled right arm and butchered mandible. Seaman Lareto Paglia was calmly sitting in his chair behind the radio – headless.

At this instant a third mortar shell hit the conning tower in the midst of a large gathering of men. The Marines, knowing that the UDT mission was scheduled for D minus 2, wanted some of their guys to act as observers. The Marine Corps observer assigned to the UDT team and aboard the 449 was Corporal Edward P. Brockmeyer. He had seen action at Saipan and Tinian and was fearless. He had lost a brother the year before to German air attacks on Salerno. Brockmeyer was one of five boys from the family serving in the military at that time. He would receive the Silver Star for this day.

Also in the conning tower was a UDT observer, Lt (jg) Leo Yates and a Navy photographer named Leo McGrath. The skipper of LCI(G) 449, Rufus Herring, was there as was the Executive Officer Bryon Yarbrough. Signalman Carl Park of course was there along with his buddy, Signalman Arthur Lewis.

There was little available room for moving around when the mortar hit right amongst them. Brockmeyer, Yarbrough, McGrath, Yates and Park were instantly killed. Most of them were unidentifiable. Yarbrough was slumped against the bulkhead with his insides spilling out with others

had to be picked up with shovels and buckets. Herring was blown out of the conning tower and landed below. Lewis sustained severe wounds in his legs and could not move.

Herring, wounded and bleeding, was wounded a second time by enemy fire from the beach. He had several bones sticking out of his shoulder yet somehow summoned the courage the courage to command the ship. He refused medical treatment until the others were taken care of. At this time Herring had a ship with all three 40mm guns out of commission, three of four 20mm guns knocked out, all circuits for firing the rockets disabled and a ship going in circles. He propped himself up against some empty shell cases that had piled up and he continued to command his ship. He would be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism and devotion to duty. At the time, however, he was losing too much blood and it was time for someone else to step up.

Ensign Bedell stepped up to assume command of the ship. Bedell, who hailed from Snow, Ohio, was now the only officer of seven not hit. He saw Ensign William Corkin, a father of two boys, slumped against the conning tower with his headset still on and plugged into a jack. He shook him and noticed that he did not have a scratch on him; however his body had turned an awful ashen color. He was dead.

Bedell immediately assumed command of the ship and ordered Lt (jg) Duvall to be treated as he was in shock and losing a lot of blood while trying to steer the ship. Duvall would receive the Silver Star for his heroic conduct. Bedell ordered Frank Blow to take over the wheel and "get them the heck out of there".

Ensign Donald Conner was another officer who was wounded and incapacitated.

Bedell would also receive a Silver Star for his quick decisions and superb leadership. Boatswain's Mate Frank Blow of Pennsylvania is credited by all with being the one man most responsible for saving their lives. Blow commandeered the ship and took the 449 out of the hazardous area, looking



for a capital ship on which to transfer the wounded and the dead. Signalman Lewis would receive the Silver Star for somehow summoning the strength to climb atop the conning tower rail and, using bloody rags, semaphore a request for medical help from *USS Terror*, a minelayer.

As the 449 drew closer, the *Terror* frantically signaled that the rockets would have to be removed from the starboard side before they would be allowed to come alongside. It was during this time that everyone heard a constant staccato of weapons fire coming from aft of the con. They looked around and saw Daniel Skluzacek of Minnesota firing away with the only operable 20mm gun. It made everyone feel good to see this veteran of the Battle of Midway single-handedly battle it out with the Japanese.

The rockets still had to be removed though, so Frank Blow, Paul Vanderboom and then the courageous gunner Daniel Skluzacek along with others began hurriedly to toss the armed and damaged rockets over the side. Bronze stars were given to these three men for their daring and hazardous deed.

Now it was time to clean up the hideous mess. Blood and gore were splashed everywhere. The decks of *USS Terror* were packed with men staring down at the wounded LCI. Several men from the mine layer volunteered to go aboard to help with the removal of the wounded and dead. The sights they saw would haunt them for the rest of their lives.

Kepner, the cook whose legs were smashed, survived because the Pharmacist Mate tied tourniquets around his legs and told a seaman standing by, "Hold these and don't let go no matter what." Fast decisions like this saved lives and limbs. Beuckman, the Pharmacist Mate, had forty-one casualties to deal with and it was because of his awesome performance this day that he was awarded a Silver Star. He would go on to raise three daughters and work at the Veterans Administration helping vets acclimate to their new legs. Kepner's daughter sent me a picture of

her father riding a motorcycle with two prosthetic legs and a huge smile on his face.

Memories—Sweet and Sad

Remember Schoenleben who died repeating "Howe, Howe, Howe"? I pondered those words for quite a while and on a hunch wondered if "Howe" was short for Howard. Maybe Howard had a son named after himself. Several hours of research later I discovered that Howard had been married at the time of his death and that he did indeed have a son whom shipmates told me he would brag about. I found a Howard Schoenleben in California and left a message on his phone. A short while later he called and informed me that his father probably did serve with my granddad because his dad had been killed. I asked, "Mr. Schoenleben, was your dad killed February 17, 1945, at Iwo Jima while serving aboard the LCI(G) 449?" He said, "Why, yes, how did you know that?" He then told me that he knew no details about his father's death. I had the privilege of telling him, "Mr Schoenleben, your dad said your name three times and then died." It was a very emotional time for both of us.

There are so many tales like this from the men of all the gunboats that were there that day at Iwo Jima. It was something they would remember sixty years later. All the 449 men talk of having to pick up hands and heads, of having to spray the decks with power hoses to dislodge the matted blood and human matter. Somehow my grandfather managed to come home after losing all his buddies and raise a family and keep them clothed and fed. However, my grandfather would forever be mentally scarred by the horrors he witnessed and endured. All the men of the 449 feel lucky to have survived and they feel sorrow for their buddies whose lives were cut short. They are grateful for the years they have had and the families they have raised.

And every February 17th, they spend time alone thinking about their buddies and a hunk of sulphuric rock called Iwo Jima.



Making First Class the Hard Way!

*A true Max D. Wright Story
As remembered by his shipmate
Quartermaster, First Class John D. Crunkleton*

We're indebted to John Crunkleton for this delightful anecdote concerning a shipmate. On the cover of this issue you will see a picture of Max Wright's daughter, Linda, and her son. We're happy to claim them as part of our Affiliates organization.

October 1, 1944, a skinny, black haired kid of 19 named Max D. Wright reported for duty on the LCI(G) 80.

Max was a Motor Machinist Mate, Second Class, commonly referred to as a "Motor Mac". These guys spent most of their time in the engine room and were, as you all remember, called the "Black Gang". I served as keeper of the ship's log, signalman, assistant navigator and, at battle station, as helmsman. I was a member of what we called the "Bridge Gang".

The "Black Gang" and the "Bridge Gang" shared the same crew quarters and Max and I became close friends. Max always had a smile on his face especially when he was working on his beloved engines. He and his gang were known to have the cleanest engine room of all twelve ships in our group. Max was working toward a promotion. He wanted to get his first class rating, which normally would include a written test but this was not an easy thing to pull off in the middle of a war in the middle of the Pacific.

One day, getting ready to make anchor for the night, Max spotted a sunken Japanese boat about 14 feet in length, just off the shore line of Saipan in the Mariana Islands. Max took this opportunity to tell Captain Bird that he could raise the boat and get the engine running just to show him how good he really was with engines.

After listening to Max's argument, Captain Bird, making good use of his salty vocabulary to express his doubts, agreed to give Max a First Class rating if, in fact, Max could raise the boat

and get the engine running long enough to circle LCI 80 just one time.

Max accepted the challenge and received permission to use the crew to raise the boat out of the water. I have no idea how they accomplished this task; but, before I knew it, we had that boat on the fantail of our ship. It was there for two days while Max worked on the engine and fixed the hole in the bottom of the boat just enough to keep it afloat for a short period of time. We must have been a strange sight doing our patrolling job along with the other ships in our group with a Japanese boat across our fantail.

Two days later Max launched the boat with the Japanese diesel firing. Max kept it running by pouring diesel fuel directly into the engine through a funnel. It made the one hundred yard voyage around our ship with Max at the helm triumphantly waving a small US flag as he returned to the starting point. Max hastily jumped out of the rapidly sinking boat and swam back to the ship.

Safely back aboard the LCI 80, Max saluted as the Japanese boat sank back to the ocean floor; then, turning smartly to Captain Bird with another snappy salute, said, "First Class Motor Machinist Mate Max D. Wright reporting!"

All of us who had the pleasure of knowing Max can attest to his tenacity in undertaking a challenge and to his skill in completing a job. I present to you this story in loving memory of my good friend and shipmate, Max D. Wright, Motor Machinist Mate First Class!

E-Mail Corrections

Please make the following corrections to your e-mail listings:

LCI	Name	Correct E-Mail
362	Ritzel, Harry	rdorabelle@aol.com
447	Schlosser, William B.	wbschlosser@sbcglobal.net
457	Peden, Edward	apeden@kc.rr.com
458	Walker, Arnold B.	arnoldbwalker@gmail.com
526	Biscotti, Ed	biscuits526@cox.net
674	Bolinger, P.J.	sag5dgtcmos@aol.com
726	Metzgar, Jesse	agnesmetzqar@peoplepc.com

A WORD OF THANKS FROM YOUR VICE PRESIDENT!

About eight years ago, my sister went up to a tree farm near our ranch to buy a Christmas tree. The owner, a man named Jim Hale, in readying the tree mentioned that he had been in the Navy. My sister said that I had been in during the war also, and that I had served on an LCI as well. Jim informed her of the National LCI Association and she told me about it. I had never heard of it, and contacted Jim who have me the information I needed to join.

It was heart-warming to know that there was an organization made up of guys that had sailed on the same kind of ship and had been through the same experiences that I had. I joined and went to my first reunion. What a great bunch of guys I met!

This feeling has only grown with each reunion that I attend. I get to know more and more of you with each get-together and my admiration for you grows with each encounter.

I am telling you this to express to you how proud I am that you have given me the honor of being your Vice President. An office such as this is no better than the people it represents, and I know of no better body of men and women than this one.

Thank you for your confidence in me and I shall do my best to warrant your trust.

-Rod Scurlock

IN MEMORIAM

"Almighty and eternal God, from whose love we cannot be parted, either by death or life; hear our prayers and thanksgiving for those whom we here remember. Grant unto sorrowing family and shipmates the blessing of your peace that passeth understanding"

LCI 20
John C. Price

LCI 33
G. Hollis Ottaway

LCI 41
Wilbur Tisch,

LCI 41
Strassburg, Robert

LCI 78
William L. Nolen Jr.

LCI 80
Max G. Wright

LCI 80
Thomas J. Nally

LCI 80
O. G. Moore

LCI 214
John McCulloch

LCI 345
Ralph Tolonen

LCI 349
Brian Lacy

LCI 372
Burt Rounds

LCI 372
James A. Bergen

LCI 422
Charles E. Coleman

LCI 407
David S. Felix

LCI 450
Carl Dorries

LCI 458
J. Bruce Boyd

LCI 458
Joseph J. Comba

LCI 483
John Lucas Bacon

LCI 486
Dr. John A. Callahan

LCI 487
David L. Smith

LCI 498
Peter Telmanik

LCI 501
Herbert R. Cox

LCI 561
Clifford F. Beckwith

LCI 581
James Flanagan

LCI 582
John C. Gillham

LCI 711
Richard T. Loomis

LCI 713
Hubert F. Miller

LCI 725
Edward C. Colwell

LCI 812
Alfred Giusti

LCI 855
Donald E. Campbell

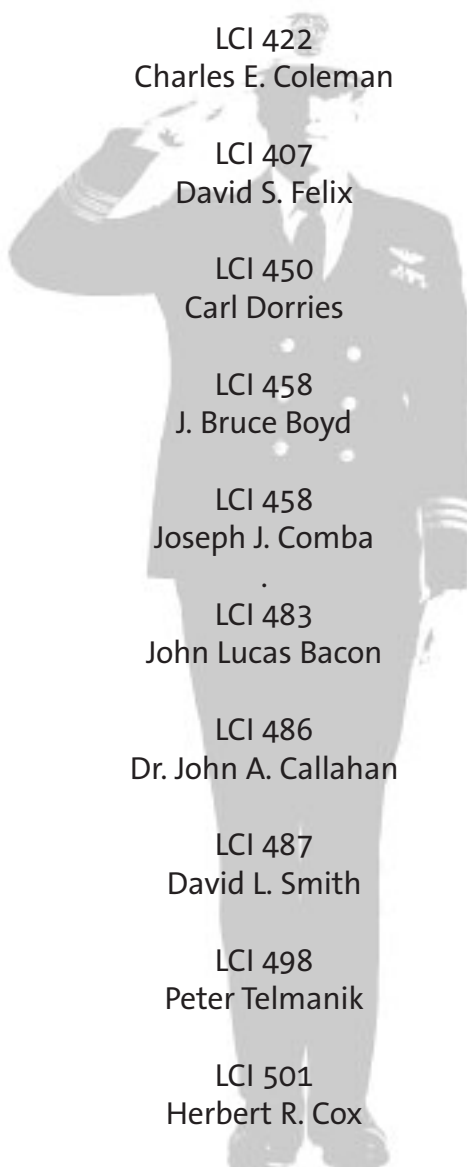
LCI 998
Harry A. Henderson

LCI 1011
Roderick M. Stubbs

LCI 1017
Eugene T. Cook

LCI 1077
Robert D. Corwin

LCI 1077
Jospeh Kizer





“Amphibious Man” Memorial to be Dedicated

*Sculptor Toby Mendez completes
clay model to be used in
casting the bronze memorial*

LClers, and other Amphibious Sailors wishing to see what they would look like, if cast in bronze, will have the opportunity to do so August 11, 2007. That is when the long-awaited memorial will be dedicated on the site of the former Amphibious Training Base, Solomons, Maryland, from which thousands of sailors, marines and soldiers trained and which became known as the “Cradle of Invasions.”

The eight-foot bronze statue entitled “On Watch” depicts a dungaree-clad sailor holding binoculars and staring intently at the horizon. It will be surrounded by a plaza made up of bricks memorializing individual sailors. The USS LCI National Association will be represented with a large plaque on a surrounding wall in recognition of the \$4,000 donation made for the memorial.

Casting the statue is a multi-step process whereby the clay is encased in wax which hardens to a flexible product which is then removed and encased in plaster so it retains its shape and detail. Bronze is then poured into the resulting mold and cured. After the removal of the wax the bronze statue will be complete.

Details of the dedication ceremony are not available as this issue of the newsletter goes to press; however, effort will be made to pass on information by email or other means. We will make special effort to get the word out to LClers living within driving distance of Solomons. President Cummer plans to represent the Association at the dedication.

If you wish to be informed further about the dedication, please drop Cummer a note. He will keep your name on file and send further information as it is available.



Tiny Clarkson's Ship's Stores

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(Revised, 1 January 2007)

ARTICLE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	NUMBER	TOTAL
Gold Amphibious Lapel Pin	1 inch	\$5.00	_____	_____
Red Amphibious Cloth Patch (<i>shoulder</i>)	4 inch	\$4.00	_____	_____
LCI Association Cloth Patch	3 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
LCI Association Decal (<i>inside window</i>)	3 inch	\$0.75	_____	_____
Red Amphibious Lapel Pin, small	7/8 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
Red Amphibious Cap Pin, large	1 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
Gold USN Fouled Anchor Cap Pin	1 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
Gold USN Eagle Cap Pin	1 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
Combat Vet Script Cap Pin	1 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
Combat Action Ribbon	Full Size	\$3.00	_____	_____
Iwo Jima – 50th Commemoration	1 inch	\$3.50	_____	_____
MINIATURE MEDALS (<i>cap or lapel</i>)	1 inch			
American Theater		\$3.50	_____	_____
European Middle East Theater		\$3.50	_____	_____
Asia Pacific Theater		\$3.50	_____	_____
Purple Heart		\$3.50	_____	_____
Philippine Liberation		\$3.50	_____	_____
Good Conduct		\$3.50	_____	_____
WWII Victory		\$3.50	_____	_____
China Service		\$3.50	_____	_____
Navy Commendation		\$3.50	_____	_____
Bronze Star		\$3.50	_____	_____
Silver Star		\$3.50	_____	_____
MINIATURE METAL LAPEL RIBBONS				
Purple Heart		\$3.50	_____	_____
China Service		\$3.50	_____	_____
Navy Commendation		\$3.50	_____	_____
Philippine Liberation		\$3.50	_____	_____
Philippine Independence		\$3.50	_____	_____
Navy Occupation		\$3.50	_____	_____
LCI Round Conn Ship Pin (<i>side view</i>) Hand fired, polished cloisonne		\$6.00	_____	_____
Normandy Invasion Pin 50th Anniversary		\$4.00	_____	_____
Normandy Invasion Beach Pins	Gold Tone			
Omaha		\$3.50	_____	_____
Utah		\$3.50	_____	_____
Juno		\$3.50	_____	_____
Tote Bag Blue w/gold logo, 13"x15"		\$5.00	_____	_____
LCI Association Cap, blue	Conn: round [] square []	\$15.00	_____	_____
LCI Association Cap, Tan Summer	Conn: round [] square []	\$15.00	_____	_____
Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum Caps				
Blue		\$15.00	_____	_____
Gold		\$15.00	_____	_____
LCI History Book, Volume I		\$40.00	_____	_____
LCI History Book, Volume II		\$40.00	_____	_____
Heath's Excellent Black Cat Flotilla Book		\$10.00	_____	_____

SUB-TOTAL

Add 12% Shipping and Packaging

TOTAL

Make check payable to:

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2313 N.E. 110th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98684
E-mail: lohning@aol.com

More Photos from Branson!



The men's room at the Shojii Tabuchi Theater, complete with billiard table and fireplace!

Vice President Rod Scurlock speaks to the State Directors.



Harold Laabs, LCI 711, of Milwaukee, WI, was the proud winner of the raffle for the beautiful model built and donated by Carl Chapple. Over \$1,100 was added to our treasury due to Carl's generosity.

President John Cummer and wife Patricia got all dolled up for the banquet.



Your Officers and Board of Directors

Please feel free to contact any of the officers or directors listed below for whatever comments or questions you may have. If the person you contact does not know the answer to your question, he will direct you to one that can. We're here to serve you!

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NOTICE: Please send all address, telephone or email address corrections and information concerning the death of an LCI shipmate to:

Nehemiah Communications, Inc,
101 Rice Bent Way, # 6
Columbia, SC 29229
(Attn: Sue)

USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

If you served aboard an LCI, you are eligible to join our Association as a regular member.
If you are a relative of someone who served aboard an LCI or if you just have a desire to have a part in remembering those who so served, you are invited to join as an Associate.

DUES ARE \$25.00 PER YEAR, June 1 through May 31. LIFE MEMBERSHIPS \$100

Please complete this form and mail it to the address indicated below with your first year's dues.

I. For Application as a Regular Member:

Name _____
LCI Served On _____ Rank/Rate _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____
Date of Birth _____
Occupation or Former Occupation _____ Wife's name _____

Help, please! As a precaution we'd like to have an alternate name and address that we might contact in case we can't reach you:

Alternate Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____

II. For Application as an Associate:

Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____
Date of Birth _____
Occupation _____ Spouse's name _____
My _____ (father, grandfather, uncle, etc.) whose name is/was _____
served on LCI Number _____ (If unknown or if you did not have a relative who served on an LCI, leave blank)
My Occupation _____ Spouse's name _____

Help, please! As a precaution we'd like to have an alternate name and address that we might contact in case we can't reach you:

Alternate Name _____
Address: _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail address _____

Privacy notice: Information solicited in this application for membership will be used only as needed for official business within the Association. No information will be released outside the Association or its agents without the consent of the member(s) concerned

Make Check payable to: **USS LCI NATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

Send Application and Check to:
USS LCI National Association
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101 Rice Bent Way, #6
Columbia, SC 29229

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